

Hogtown HomeGrown

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Slow Food in a fast food world

We just got back from Slow Food Nation, the United States’ inaugural gathering in San Francisco—it was energizing and enlightening! Speakers included Carlo Petrini, Wendell Berry, Vandana Shiva, Alice Waters, Eric Schlosser and Michael Pollan. Highlights? Huge farmers markets—city hall with a garden planted out front—a marketplace of local food specialties—fresh crab burritos for breakfast—and, of course, the sourdough!

Slow Food began in 1986 as a response to McDonald’s new location near the famous Spanish Steps in Rome. People took to the streets with bowls of penne pasta to protest the import of fast, industrialized “food” to a country know for its real food. Carlo Petrini, founder of Slow Food, emphasizes that food should be “good, clean and fair.”

The organization, now with over 85,000 members in 132 countries, is about more than food—it is about social justice, feeding the world, saving the environment, teaching children about food—yet, it all starts in the company of friends and family lingering over a table full of home-cooked, seasonal, local food.

Alice Waters, owner of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California, who shouldered the national Slow Food banner, took teaching children about food to heart and created an edible schoolyard curriculum. Young children work the soil—learning about science, math and growing food, all while enjoying fresh fruits and veggies. Instead of counting plastic beads or Cheerios, they count seeds and vegetables. Their school district, Berkeley Unified, serves only locally grown and produced food, including grass-fed beef hot dogs and hamburgers, giving the children a taste for what could be on their dinner table for life!

The Alachua County School District began to eat local this year by participating in the Farm to School program. Our local schools will initiate the program by serving local turnips, collards and sweet potatoes, teaching our children’s taste buds to savor real food.

How can you introduce Slow Food to your family and friends? Shop seasonally and locally at farmers markets, cook at home, plant a garden and be aware every time you eat! Want easy access to more Slow Food info? Visit www.hogtownhomegrown.com/links.html.

Yogurt Cheese Torta

INGREDIENTS

4 cups drinkable yogurt, drained 48 hours in a coffee filter-lined colander in refrigerator
1/2 cup soft sun-dried tomatoes, chopped 1 tablespoon tomato paste
3/4 cup pesto, divided 1/2 cup pine nuts

DIRECTIONS

In separate bowls, mix 1/2 the yogurt cheese with the sundried tomatoes and the other half with 1/2 cup of pesto. Set aside. Line a bowl with foil and smooth 1/4 cup of pesto into a flat circle in the center of the bowl. Top with the sun-dried tomato-cheese mixture and smooth flat. Cover with the pine nuts, then carefully smooth the pesto mixture over the pine nuts into an even layer. Top with wax paper, slip the whole bowl into a plastic bag and refrigerate. Unmold onto platter and serve with veggies and crackers or bread.



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- Beans—green
- Cucumbers—mini seedless, Kirby, traditional
- Eggplant—purple Italian, oriental
- Grapes—muscadines, scuppernongs
- Greens—spinach, arugula
- Herbs—basil
- Lettuce—spring mix
- Okra
- Onions—yellow
- Papaya—green
- Peas—white-acre (shelled and in pods), crowder, baby limas, black eyes, speckled butter, zipper cream
- Peanuts
- Pecans
- Peppers—green/red sweet bell, red jalapeno, habanero, sweet banana, cubanelle
- Persimmons—Fuyu, Hachiya and many astringent varieties
- Potatoes—sweet, red new
- Squash—yellow summer, zucchini, calabasa
- Tomatoes—beefsteak, cluster, grape

Freezer Basil

Want to have access to fresh basil flavor all year long? Place 6 cups of fresh basil leaves, no stems, in a food processor. Begin chopping and then stream in 1 cup of olive oil. Process to desired consistency. Scoop into plastic freezer bag and seal out air. When you need some fresh basil taste, just break off a chunk and add to whatever you are cooking. The basil maintains its color and flavor, but not the texture, so don't plan to use it as you would the raw herb.

Local and Fresh— Basil

Basil is one of my favorite flavors to cook with—spicy Thai basil, mellower large-leaved Italian type and citrusy Lemon Basil!

I prefer Thai basil for making pesto for the freezer—the flavor is stronger and lasts longer while in cold storage.

Try large leaves of Italian basil rolled around a bit of cheese and sun-dried tomato—wow—fabulous flavors in a bite-sized package.

Imagine incredible seafood dishes topped with a chiffonade of Lemon Basil and a flurry of lemon zest.

Try fresh or dried basil to add flavor to your next recipe!

Cedar Key Clams with Basil and Lemon

INGREDIENTS

- 3 dozen Cedar Key Clams in shell, washed
- 2/3 cup freezer basil
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 1/2 cup white wine (try pinot grigio)
- 8 ounces pasta whole wheat fettuccini, cooked

DIRECTIONS

Mix together freezer basil (frozen or defrosted), lemon zest and juice, set aside.

Heat large heavy pan over high heat, add clams and do not disturb until clams open and juices start to flow. Drizzle 3-4 table-spoons of basil and lemon over clams, mix in lightly and add wine. Stir again, lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes.

Mix remaining basil and lemon with hot pasta. Serve clams in their shells with lots of pan juices over the pasta, a side of hot crusty bread and extra napkins.

White Clam Sauce with Linguini

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup olive oil
1 bottle, 8 ounces, clam juice
1 pound clam meat, fresh or defrosted
1 pound linguini, cooked al dente
6 cloves garlic, chopped finely
1/2 cup white wine
1 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 cup parmesan, shredded

DIRECTIONS

Heat a large, heavy bottomed sauté pan over medium-high heat, add oil, then garlic. Stir and turn heat to medium low. Stirring occasionally, sauté garlic until it turns a light golden color.

Add bottled clam juice, white wine and any juices from clam meat. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to low and simmer until reduced by half.

After pasta is cooked and drained, turn heat up to medium and stir in clams. Simmer until clams are tender, about 5 minutes.

Stir in parsley and serve over hot pasta, ladling on lots of broth. Top with cheese, and freshly ground black pepper, if desired. Serve with crusty bread to sop up all the garlicky wine and clam juices.

Grape Tomato Salad

INGREDIENTS

2 cups grape tomatoes, sliced in half
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1/4 teaspoon each sugar and pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

Place cut tomatoes in a glass or ceramic bowl—not metal. Add remaining ingredients, except salt. Let marinate for 15 minutes, taste and salt if necessary.

Marinate at least one hour at room temperature before serving. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

“Only the eggs are local” cookies

INGREDIENTS

2 sticks unsalted butter
1/2 cup white sugar
2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
2 eggs
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups chocolate chips OR 1 cup chips and 1 cup nuts OR 1 cup nuts and 1 cup dried fruit

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cream butter and sugars, add eggs and mix until light. Mix flour, soda and salt and add to batter, stirring well. Stir in vanilla and add-ins. Bake teaspoon-fuls 5-7 minutes at 375 degrees. Dough can be stored covered and refrigerated for one week.

Tricks and Tips

If you can't get fresh clam meat and don't want to shell your own, you can make this with canned chopped clams as we did for the past 29 years (it takes about 6 cans), but I will warn you, once you have tasted fresh clams, you won't want to eat anything else!

Tricks and Tips

You can use this basic dough to make all kinds of cookies—raisin walnut—apricot almond—white and dark chocolate—dried cranberries, white chocolate chips and macadamia nuts!

Hogtown HomeGrown

Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More
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Tricks and Tips

Never made yogurt cheese before? Like the taste of yogurt? Try this—place a large colander over a bowl and line the colander with paper coffee filters or layers of cheesecloth. Pour or spoon yogurt into colander, cover and refrigerate for 24-48 hours. Use as you would cream cheese, but it is so much better for you! Mix in some chopped fresh herbs and slather on a toasted bagel!

Yogurt Cheese Vanilla Cheesecake

INGREDIENTS

1 teaspoon unsalted butter	1/2 cup pecans, finely chopped
3 cups yogurt cheese	1/2 cup sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract	1/8 teaspoon salt
2 eggs	bittersweet chocolate chips (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare a regular 8 or 9 inch pie pan by coating with butter and scattering with chopped pecans.

Mix yogurt cheese with sugar. Beat until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and salt, mixing lightly. Beat in eggs one at a time, making sure each one is thoroughly incorporated before adding the next.

If using the optional chocolate chips, add them now and fold in gently.

Pour batter into prepared pie pan, place on cookie sheet in preheated oven and bake for 45 minutes or until only the center jiggles lightly when pie is shaken. Cool at room temperature for 1 hour, then cover and refrigerate for 8 hours before serving.

INDIVIDUAL CHEESECAKES

Prepare batter as directed above. Pour into buttered one-cup custard cups. Place filled cups into a water bath and bake for 45 minutes, until lightly jiggly, but firm. Cool, then refrigerate for several hours. Unmold onto individual serving plates. Delightful with fresh or preserved fruit, especially figs. Top with a little powdered sugar for an extra-decadent touch.